

All Roads Lead to

COMPLETE STREETS

Over the next five years, Caltrans plans a steady increase in the number of projects that move California closer to a fully integrated system that provides safe mobility for bicyclists, pedestrians, transit vehicles, truckers and motorists.

This comes together in the *Complete Streets Implementation Action Plan 2.0* (CSIAP 2.0), which applies to all activities and products on the state highway system. This responds to wishes voiced by the public, Legislature and the Governor's Office to help the state reduce greenhouse gas emissions through non-auto vehicle methods.

The action plan also supports the new Caltrans 2015-2020 Strategic Management Plan (SMP), which calls for a 20 percent annual increase in the number of Complete Street projects by 2020, after determining the baseline in 2016.

That is a significant departure for a department once focused almost exclusively on motor vehicles. Of the 386 projects that made it into the final design phase in fiscal year 2014-15, 26 percent included one or more Complete Street features. That increased to 33 percent in 2015-16, marking the new baseline. It is a sea change in the way Caltrans looks at projects.

A good example can be found in Redding. The Downtown Redding Pavement Preservation and Bike Lane Project was initially planned, as its name suggests, as a simple pavement resurfacing project. But it was transformed into an intermodal model that serves as an example of what Caltrans is looking to do elsewhere.

Working with the community's support, Caltrans and the Redding Public Works Department created a "road diet," reducing a downtown thoroughfare from three to two lanes to accommodate a bike lane. A second bike lane was added on an adjacent street. The project created vital transportation links between modes, such as bicycle, pedestrian, transit and passenger rail. It connects two highly traveled river trails with a single and safe, multimodal corridor providing transportation system connectivity and efficacy.

The project (which is detailed in the *Second Quarter 2015 Mile Marker*) has provided safe and convenient, nonmotorized transportation options, which in turn improve the quality of life, quality of health of residents by providing active transportation alternatives and may ultimately promote future economic development within the downtown urban core.

Getting There

The Complete Streets action plan has two significant hurdles: data and guidelines.

Transportation departments across the nation have, for decades, collected data about traffic patterns and pavement conditions, but much less on active



A Complete Street was created for Castro Street at West Evelyn Avenue in the Bay Area town of Mountain View.

transportation. Similarly, longstanding project delivery guidelines don't always align with the Complete Streets approach.

For example, programs within the State Highway Operation and Protection Program (SHOPP) have historically been divvied up by funding for certain types of projects, which makes it difficult to take a multi-user or multi-objective Complete Streets approach on every SHOPP project. This structure is being reevaluated with the Transportation Asset Management Program, which focuses on decision-making based on quality information and well-defined objectives, and a performance-based approach in the Strategic Management Plan to achieve the new mission, vision and goals.

Overall, the CSIAP 2.0 has made a lot of progress, especially through changes in design standards and design flexibility, as well as changes in planning procedures and outcomes, and cross-functional coordination and communication through the Strategic Management Plan. More than 100 action items were reported in the CSIAP 2.0. Of those, 14 actions were identified by a Complete Streets Technical Advisory Committee as high-focus items. These actions are important to make institutional changes to effect complete streets in all Caltrans

work. The expectation is that 80 percent of these will be implemented by December 2016 and all 14 by 2018.

Recently Completed and 2016 High-Focus Action Items

- Updated the Highway Design Manual guidance on design speed, place types, lane and shoulder widths, and curb extensions (bulb outs). Discussed the state-of-the-practice and latest research on trees in the medians of conventional highways. Provided recommendation and a delivery plan for changes to the Chief of the Division of Design. (Completed)
- Evaluated the use of Multimodal Level of Service from the Highway Design Manual for assessing impacts and related mitigation in Intergovernmental Review projects. (Completed)
- Developed a comprehensive, data-driven Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP) Update that defines State safety goals and describes a program of strategies to improve safety on all public roads for all modes of transportation, including pedestrian and bicycle, to be considered in the plan. (Completed)
- Prepare and implement outreach training for the Active Transportation Program guidelines. (April 2016)

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